Legendary

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/8317435.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warnings:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence, Major Character Death
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Hannibal (TV), I Am Legend (2007)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham, Raj Hamilton, others - Character
Additional Tags:	I Am Legend Centered Fic, IN the universe at least, Hannigram - Freeform, Murder, Cannibalism, Hannibal is a Cannibal, Will is a Cannibal, Darkseekers, Zombies, Vampires, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Hannictober, Romance, Death, Hannibal is Snarky, Hannibal Loves Will, Feels, Smitten Hanni, Hannibal eats the zombies, Oh God Yes, Humor, I Am Legend, season 3 divergence, Mentions of Molly, Mentions of Suicide, Suicidal Thoughts, Murder Husbands
Language:	English
Series:	Part 7 of #Hannictober
Collections:	#Hannictober
Stats:	Published: 2016-10-18 Words: 8,066 Chapters: 1/1

Legendary

by Watermelonsmellinfellon

Summary

The actions of one person dooms humanity. And all Will can think about is Hannibal, and how he needed to see him again. How living wouldn't be worth it, if everything he cared for was gone.

Thankfully, Hannibal is still alive and is thrilled to see him again. Catastrophe and certain death don't scare him in the least.

Notes

#Hannictober Day 18: Zombies

This is a Hannibal set in the I Am Legend Universe, fic.

For anyone who doesn't know, the Darkseekers in the original novel actually advanced in intelligence and became effin brilliant. They overcame their ailment and began building a society of their own. So in this fic, the Darkseekers are smart and can tell the difference between danger and no danger.

Hannibal is considered like the devil to them because they scent the human in his diet. You know, 30+ years of eating people leaves traces somehow.

I tweaked info on the I Am Legend universe.

See the end of the work for more notes

A/N: Hello, people!

I don't own Hannibal.

I have no beta.

ENJOY!

CHECK ME OUT ON TUMBLR. HELLY-WATERMELONSMELLINFELLON. I FOLLOW BACK.

Will Graham had been emotional the day the cure for Cancer had been created. His father had died of Lung Cancer when he was a cop in New Orleans. If only the treatment had been discovered two decades ago, he'd still have the most inspirational man he'd ever known, on his side.

At least, that was what Will had thought at first. Hours of crying and frustrated tears had only brought him a headache. Instead of wallowing in self pity, Will decided that he could at least be happy for all the people who were currently getting the cure. At least the lives of those in need were being improved.

Boy was he wrong.

The 'miraculous' cure, ended up ruining everything. It did not cure the Cancer, so much as it mutated the Cancer. Made it even worse. The symptoms disappeared for a while, but then… *other symptoms* began to show.

Dr. Alice Krippen may have had good intentions in hopes of making the cure mutate the Cancer and force it into helping the body instead, but her idea ended up ruining a good percent of the world.

Within months of getting the cure - which at the time could only be offered in Krippen's home city of London - people started experiencing pains. Bloodshot eyes followed by uncontrollable bleeding from the tear ducts. Then, their hair would being to fall out in mass clumps and their breathing would become labored.

After weeks of questions being raised and no one doing anything about it, it finally happened.

One little girl in Edinburgh had been living her life once again, now that she was Cancer free. But she began complaining about being hungry and how nothing she ate would satisfy that hunger. Unable to control her insistent starvation, the little eight year old took a bite out of her little brother. And then another. And another, until she was found by her father, who locked her in the room as he called the cops.

The news all across the world broke out in similar stories within a month.

Suddenly, people were being bitten or scratched by their family members who had taken the ‘cure’ and were also exhibiting the same symptoms.

Nothing could stop the ravaging hunger of these people. The military had to be brought in to keep them contained.

And just when the situation was under control - or so it seemed - people who hadn’t even been near ‘the infected’ were also showing the signs of this catastrophe.

It became apparent that this was no longer a cure, but a virus. One that was beginning to spread through the air.

And the virus was deadly, killing at least 90% of the people who were infected and mutating the rest of them.

It was ruled out that unless animals were bitten or scratched by ‘the infected’, they were immune to the virus. Also, in the time the pandemic had spread, not one person with O Negative blood type had been infected either by touch, by wound, or by simply breathing in the same space as ‘the infected’.

It became apparent that all those with O Negative were the lucky ones.

Will was a lucky one.

Molly and her son were not. Coincidentally, neither were the dogs, as they ended up being victims of the two real quick. With much regret, but also knowledge that it was better this way, Will shot his wife and her son until both stopped moving, leaving Will all alone in the cold of Maine.

Nine months after this shit had started, two and a half years since Hannibal had been locked away.

The only person WiIl had was Hannibal… and if Hannibal was infected, then Will might as well not bother anymore. The will to fight on was kind of pointless when you were all alone with not even a dog for company.

Memory palaces didn’t always cut it.

‘The infected’ that had mutated had become more than human. Bald all over, hyperaware, starved, sensitive to any form of UV lighting, and their senses had increased drastically.

In the daytime it was safe, but in the night. In the night they came out in droves. They ravaged anything they got their hands on. The wildlife suffered, the rest of the living population that hadn’t made it to the ‘safe havens’ suffered. There seemed to be no hope against them.

All there was was the belief that once they could no longer find food, they’d starve to death. If not, at least a century to pass before old age took them.

Hopefully.

Will left Augusta just after dawn, and drove straight through New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York before he managed to come upon a settlement of the O Negs in Pennsylvania, by noon that day.

The people scouted his location from a mile away and had armed officers intercepting him.

“Sir, if you have nothing to hide you will step out of the vehicle and put your hands behind your head!”

Will parked the car and sighed. With slow movements - he was a cop once, he knew how to handle this business - he extricated himself from the car and waited for them to begin the search. The men surrounded the car, looking through it for anything incriminating.

“Name!” demanded the man with the largest gun. His eyes were beady as they looked Will over.

“William Graham.”

“Former Occupation?”

There certainly hadn’t been any jobs in the past few months.

“Professor of Forensic Psychology at the FBI Academy in Quantico West Virginia. Special Agent and Criminal Profiler to the FBI. Boat Mechanic.”

He even still had his old badge which one man was pulling out of his wallet now.

“You O Neg?”

“Yeah.”

“We’ll need to screen you anyway. Jeremy is going to place the piece in your mouth and you will blow into it. It’ll tell us if you are infected. Make no sudden movements and just follow our orders.”

Will knows the procedure and withholds the need to inform him that he isn’t threatening in the least. He breathes into the machine and smiles calmly as the light turns green.

“And now he’ll prick your finger to make doubly sure you are O Neg. Again, comply and this will all be over quickly.”

More like, ‘if you aren't O Neg, we’re gunning you down now to save us the trouble’ but Will still remains silent, not even wincing when his finger is sliced open.

A moment later, Jeremy announces, “He’s all clear!”

The men stand down with a signal from the boss, who offers his hand to give Will a firm shake.

“Can never been too careful. Our community is small, but protected, and we’d like to keep it that way. I’m Raj Hamilton. Are you looking for shelter, Mr. Graham?”

“I’m actually going to see if a friend of mine is still alive. I hadn’t planned on living if the news wasn’t pleasant,” admitted Will, unabashedly.

The men all hissed in sympathy.

“If your friend is alive and un-infected, and an O Neg, we’ll gladly take him and you. We need all the people we can get. We’ve only got a few hundred here and the next reservation is in Toronto.”

Will hummed, “I… don’t think you’ll want him around. He’s not particularly good.”

“We *do* have some criminals, though they are on watch. The need for survival outweighs the need to do bad. Besides, there isn’t much they can do to make any of this worse.”

“This man is locked up in the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane for a reason. While he can… curb his dietary tendencies, I’m not sure people would be comfortable with a cannibal who also happens to be America’s most terrifying serial killer, living among them.”

He counted down the second from three, watching enraptured as it went through their minds.

Raj backed away very slowly.

“H-Hannibal the C-Cannibal is the friend you speak of?”

“An asshole, but my friend nonetheless. So you see, it probably wouldn’t be smart to allow him entry... if he’s alive.”

The others, who had gripped their weapons tighter, turned to Raj for guidance.

Raj looked horrified but intrigued at the same time. “I was dishonorably discharged for blowing a medic tent when some of our men were still inside, just so I could off the enemy. I went on to less than savory practices after returning home. There isn’t a person in our community who was in law enforcement. I’m sure most of them wouldn’t know anything about your friend… if he stays low.”

Will was speechless. He was considering letting a known cannibal into his home where so few humans remained?

“I’m the leader too, so they have to listen to me anyway. If your friend can control himself, he can stay.”

What strange universe was Will a part of?

Moments later, he was given several handguns and a rifle, plus a breathing machine and blood tester. They filled his tank with gasoline and offered him a small bag of vegetables cultivated within their borders.

“If we do not see you back in a week, we’ll assume the worst.”

And so Will found himself once again on his way to Baltimore, with only six hours of pure daylight to keep him safe.

The ride was long and time consuming. Music no longer played on the radio and he was stuck listening to the last gift he’d gotten from Molly. A compilation of love songs.

He kept his eyes peeled and one hand on a gun at all times. It didn’t hurt to be prepared.

Will stared up at the building. It looked abandoned, but one could never be too sure. Darkseekers liked to stay indoors during the day. As far as it was known, they didn’t ever sleep.

The building was formerly home to several criminals all locked behind bars. Darkseekers weren’t much stronger than regular humans so the possibility of breaking out of a cell was very high.

Still, Will had five handguns with six bullets each, and an assault rifle.

With the rifle in hand, Will approached the doors carefully. All he needed to do was get to the head office and find out where Hannibal was located. If he wasn’t there, then Will would simply go back to Pennsylvania and attempt to live.

The front door opened with a creak. The lights in the hallway were on blast and not a sound came from the inside.

He slid through the door and kept himself to the wall, slinking through the shadows as he ascended a flight of stairs toward the office. From there, he locked the double doors and rummaged through the large desk for papers.

Files of people he didn’t care about. Agreements. Paperwork.

Hannibal Lecter. Perfect.

Will took the file in hand and flipped it open.

Name: Hannibal Lecter VIII
Aliases: Hannibal the Cannibal, Chesapeake Ripper, Copycat Killer, Il Mostro
Gender: Male
Age: 46
Blood Type: O Negative
Nationality: Lithuanian

He was O Neg. If that was the case, then he should be alive if he hadn’t been killed and eaten.

Will shook himself of such thoughts. He needed to stay focused.

Cell Block: Z

Wow, they took all kinds of precautions against him.

Will took the switchblade in the left drawer as the bottle of vodka in the bottom drawer, slipping them into his jacket pocket.

Time for the trek down to Hannibal's cell.

Will turned on every light he found. He slunk through the shadows and ignored the sounds around him, hoping that they weren't coming from what he thought they were coming from. His imagination was still overactive and in these moments, it wasn't helping.

Creak.

Clap.

Bum bum bum.

Pop.

Buzz.

Grip tightening on the gun, he descended another flight of stairs, snapping the lights on and coming face to face with a long hallway… full of Darkseekers... who were staring at him. Their bodies converged, hyperventilating tellingly. His stomach dropped in horror.

"Fuck!"

They roared and lunged as he fired. Three downed in seconds, two more a second later. A few left now. Shoot, duck, shoot, duck.

The hallway wasn't very wide and it didn't give optimal chance to dodge their attacks.

Four left now.

Oh, these ones were smart. They were weaving through each other to try to confuse him. Without a care, Will unloaded the rest of the rifle, enjoying it when the remaining Darkseekers collapsed and ceased all movement.

The former profiler leaned against the wall and took several steadying breaths. Adrenaline never lasted too long. The thrill of using a gun again was being outstripped by the realization that he had maybe an hour of daylight left to get somewhere safe.

He had to find Hannibal first though.

Calming himself, Will lifted the rifle and continued on down the hall. A large door stood at the end, with light spilling out from beneath it. He fortified himself with muttered praises and encouragements as he pulled the handle slowly, keeping the muzzle of the gun in front protectively.

There was no sound coming from inside. With his shoe, her pushed the door open a bit more and peaked past the edge to see exactly who he had come to find.

Hannibal Lecter was sitting at a desk in the middle of a large, closed off cell. His hands were folded calmly on the metal and he was looking at the door expectantly.

Will opened the door fully and rushed inside, closing it behind him quietly. Darkseekers had good hearing. It was why he had tiptoed the whole way down. If the gunshots hadn't alerted any others in the building to his arrival, other loud noises would do it.

"Will."

Once certain that he wasn't going to be surprised by anything other than Hannibal, Will lowered his visible weapon and regarded the doctor behind the glass. He was looking a little tired. His hair had been cut and was in the process of growing back. He looked gaunt.

Around him were shelves full of books a bed off to the side, sketches on the desk, and a small toilet. Damn. Hannibal got to live in comfort even while in prison. Unfair.

"Dr. Lecter," he greeted with a tip of the head.

"Judging from your nervous actions and the fact that you are armed, I'd say this isn't a normal breakout attempt."

Will gave a humorless laugh. "No, no. Not your average escape I'd say. In short, the world has gone to hell in a handbasket."

The other man hummed lightly. "It would explain why I haven't had contact with anyone in nearly three days."

Three days.

"As in, no food or water?" Will asked, already expecting the answer.,

"Yes. I assumed it was another one of Alana's ridiculous attempts at revenge," the man shrugged, looking nonplussed.

Alana. Will wanted to ask, but they barely had any time to work with.

"I don't know about Alana, but I do know that it's dangerous to stay here. But… I need to confirm a few things."

Will withdrew the breather and the tester from his pocket. "About nine months ago a British doctor developed the cure for Cancer. The cure was to mutate the Cancer into helping the body and instead, it made people sick. The Cancer was no longer a problem, it was the mutation that became an issue. It started changing the recipients of the cure. Tears of blood, hyperventilation, intense starvation, hair rubbing off without reason, and severe pain."

Placing the rifle on the ground, Will walked on over to the small box that was no doubt used to pass things to Hannibal.

“And then,” he sighed, “then they began acting on their hunger, trying various types of food to sate themselves. As far as I know, nothing stops the hunger. It started with a little girl in Scotland eating her baby brother and similar stories began reaching the news. Anyone bitten or scratched by these people would begin showing symptoms as well. And then people who had never even been around these people were showing the symptoms.”

He shoved the two machines into the little box and motioned for Hannibal to come over. “You need to breath into that machine and place some of your blood on the other. Those with O Negative blood cannot be infected in any way. This is a precaution to make sure you are safe to be around. If not… I’m sure you can guess what will happen.”

The former doctor eyed the technology with interest as he slowly made his way over.

“You mean to kill me if I do not pass your test?” he asked conversationally, looking over the objects. Like he wasn’t discussing his death.

“Yes. And then myself.”

“Suicide is the enemy, Will,” said Hannibal, looking disappointed.

“Loneliness is the enemy,” corrected the brunet. “I had to shoot my wife and her son. They ate my dogs. The virus ‘infected everyone not of O Negative. Ninety percent of ‘the infected’ couldn’t handle the strain on their bodies and died. The remaining ten percent however, are the cause of the commotion your heard just now.”

Hannibal breathed into the tube and showed the green light to Will, who smiled in relief. He then allowed the small needle of the tester to take his blood. It came out O Negative.

“And these remaining ten percent are worse, I assume?”

“You assume correctly. I’d say Vampire/Zombie hybrids and that’s putting it mildly.”

Hannibal quirked a brow, “Vampires, Will?”

He shrugged as he looked over the box in the wall. It was large enough that should it be removed, the space would allow a grown man to slip through. It was good that Hannibal seemed thinner.

“Stronger and faster. Heightened senses. Aversion to all UV lightning because it burns them. Always hungry. Bereft of all body hair. Sped up metabolisms that cause them to hyperventilate constantly. They roar like lions. Their virus is spread through a bite or a scratch. Vampire/Zombie hybrids known as Darkseekers. There you go.”

He checked his watch again. “We have one hour of daylight left. That’s one hour of safety. We probably are not getting back to the car by then, I can tell. So either we stay in here all night or we hide in the main office. I wouldn’t suggest staying here as killing even one of them sends the others into a rampage.”

The switchblade proved useful in cutting the mental of the box into pieces. All the while, Hannibal stood by, watching Will’s every move.

“And where are we to go once you free me?”

“There is a small community of O Negs in Pennsylvania, run by a dishonorably discharged army vet. He knows where I am and he has okayed your admittance into the community. Keep a low profile and no one needs to know who you are and what you did. It’s like going into hiding, except you don’t kill people and broadcast them like love letters this time.”

Will was obviously talking about the Three of Swords presentation Hannibal had made him out of Anthony Dimmond’s body.

“‘Love letters’?”

“I’m not blind to the meaning behind tarot cards. I understood it for what it was.”

The box cracked and Will grinned in satisfaction, pulling pieces off. Standing, he aimed a sharp kick at the center and gave a jubilant yell when the box popped out of the wall, leaving a large square.

“You’ve done the impossible before, so good luck in getting out of that.”

Hannibal stared for another moment, before removing his grey prison garb and tossing it through first. He stooped down and crawled through the hole, just barely able to pass through it. With a grunt, the man pulled himself to his feet and gave Will an expectant look.

Will handed over the suit and pulled out a handgun while Hannibal redressed himself.

“Do you actually know how to use a gun?”

“I have made it a point to learn many things. I can even wield a sword if need be.”

“Where the hell’d you get a sword?”

“I attended a boarding school in France.”

The French taught people how to use swords? The hell?

Hannibal’s eyes were dark and almost all-knowing. As if he knew what was going to happen in the future. And he was prepared for it too. The man took the gun in hand and unlocked the safety with ease, giving Will an ‘I told you so’ look.

“Okay. We might be able to make it up there to get to the car. Problem is, I have little over half a tank, it is nearly dark, and loud noise draws their attention. It we ran out of gas before reaching the shelter, we’re fucked. We would need a safe place until sunrise and I don’t know of any. So we either have Chilton’s old office to hide in or we just wait it out in here.”

Hannibal hummed, looking unconcerned. “My basement was specially designed by me to double as a bomb shelter. That could work.”

Hannibal’s old house was about ten minutes away if there was traffic. There wasn’t any, but still… it could take time. Broken down cars, fallen buildings, crashed helicopters.

But Hannibal was already opening the door and stepping out as if he wasn't alarmed at the possibility of being attacked.

"Hey! You may be a serial killer who has some skills, but these things aren't human any longer, you can't just walk around like that!"

Hannibal ignored his worried words, striding down the hallway of dead bodies with a confidence that Will wished he had. Hannibal rarely ever showed panic because he was so sure of himself and his place in the world.

"If what you say is correct, we cannot be infected even if they bite or wound us. I have had worse wounds than a bite or a scratch. Prolonged convalescence doesn't bother me. Continued isolation does."

Grumbling about fussy cannibals, Will followed after. He'd just gotten Hannibal back. He wasn't going to lose him to a bunch of fucking Darkseekers!

Hannibal ascended the stairs like he knew his way around perfectly. Probably made a map in his memory palace or something. To Will's great relief, they made it to the main floor without incident, Hannibal's swagger never lessening even when a Darkseeker leapt out of the receptionist station. He simply lifted his gun and shot it once in the head.

Outside, they got into the car and Will quickly reversed out of there, taking the empty road toward Baltimore's center, where the wealthy had formerly resided.

"Why did you come for me, Will?"

"I had to see if you were still alive," admitted Will. "I don't have anyone else."

He drove around a large SUV that blocked an intersection and sighed as the sun continued to sink in the sky. He pressed on the gas, raising the needle over seventy.

"How often did you think of me, Will? I thought of you every day."

"More like I couldn't get you out of the foyer, so whenever I would close my eyes, you'd be standing there, waiting for me."

"Did your wife know about us?"

Will cut a small look in the man's direction. The 'us' in that sentence could mean so many things.

"She knew enough."

A pleased smirk overcame Hannibal's face as he smugly inquired, "Was I your dirty little secret?"

"More like you were *mine* and I wasn't sharing you with anyone else."

That shut the man up immediately, leaving him to watch Will pensively.

Will turned onto the street that Hannibal's house was on, seeing that it was one of the few to remain in tact during the past few months.

The car screeched to a halt right on the lawn and Hannibal had palmed the switchblade, already working the door open by the time Will managed to get the bag of food from the backseat.

"EEEEEEEE!"

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII!"

Shit.

Heart pounding like mad, Will yelled, "Get in the house!"

"Well come on then."

He rushed after the blond, slamming the door shut and locking it. Will dashed after Hannibal, who was busy unlocking his special basement with whatever kind of code he had that didn't require electricity?

Down the stairs, Hannibal pulled up part of the carpet on the floor and lifted the door.

"Get in."

Without think about it, Will slid into the hole, grunting only slightly when he slid down some stairs. Hannibal followed a few seconds later, carefully closing the door and pressing something that made a low hissing noise.

"The electricity still works," the older man remarked in awe. Oh.

"Foolish of them to do so but helpful to us. That door will not open without the code, that I have. It is nearly a foot of steel. The door over there is the same."

"All I see is darkness."

"As I created this for my benefit and not yours, of course I can navigate it in the dark. Also, I have a mental version in my memory palace already."

A warm hand wrapped around Will's arm and began tugging him down what he assumed was a hall.

"The FBI could not find my 'murder dungeon' and kept asking me where it was. Even Ms. Lounds couldn't find it and she had broken into this building numerous times."

Hannibal sounded darkly amused and Will shivered. Another whooshing sound followed by a sharp click and a beep filled the room. Lights flickered on overhead and Will frowned as rows of tables and various saws along the walls were made visible.

Though despondent and worried over the cleanliness of the nearest table, Will placed the bag down and pulled out what he'd been given. Carrots, celery, radishes, a few apples, and a bottle of water. It wasn't super clean, but it would have to do.

Above them, he could hear the screeching of the Darkseekers echoing through the walls and floor. He had a feeling that with a city full of screaming creatures, they weren't going to be getting any sleep tonight.

Hannibal plucked an apple from the table and shined it on his prison suit. He then took a bite. Will could tell that while he was doing his best to be mannerly, he was starving. The brunet pushed the collection of food toward the other man.

"I at least ate breakfast this morning. Eat. Sorry it's not gourmet or even long pig."

"I know hunger very well, Will. While I would prefer to eat better food, I cannot be picky when I do not have the right or means to be."

Will sank to the floor and crossed his legs. The rifle rested beside his right leg, facing the metal door just in case. Hannibal sat as well, but in a much more dignified manner. If one could make a pretzel dignified.

"You know, I was just thinking," whispered Will, trying to keep his voice low. "Beverly got in here, but you said that it needed a code."

"I left it open because I knew either she or Jack would come on your behalf and I wanted to send a message when I captured my prey," said Hannibal just as quietly.

The younger man shivered at the thought of how meticulously Hannibal planned out his whole game all those years ago. He took a moment to think of Beverly and felt himself sigh sadly at the thought of how she died.

"Has anyone tried to see if these creature are edi-"

"You are *not* eating them," asserted Will, glaring fiercely. "Why would you even consider that?"

"I eat long pig, Will. Have been for thirty-five plus years. If they cannot infect us at all, I say we make them fear us. Realizing that I will just as soon eat them as they would me, might shake them up."

Will rubbed his eyes tiredly. He couldn't believe Hannibal was seriously considering eating a Darkseeker just to instill some fear into them. Could they even understand the ramifications of an 'uninfected' eating one of them? All of the Darkseekers he'd encountered hadn't been too intelligent, though they did eventually learn from the actions of their fallen brethren.

And the decision to eat them... it had never been tested before. What if that was the only way for O Negs to get infected? He didn't want to risk it.

The look on Hannibal's face disagreed with his assessment. Will shook his head repeatedly and tried up the annoyance in his eyes.

“No. Eating. Darkseekers.”

“You know Will, you worry too much,” Hannibal smiled, eyes practically twinkling in good humor that Will was certainly not returning because there was nothing good about this situation.

“I wish I had a chance to make a molotov cocktail before getting in here,” grumbled the mechanic. “They seek indoors when it get’s light and the room above this didn’t have many windows.”

Hannibal’s hands waved toward the far wall and the collection of saws. “Dear Will, we have weapons at our disposal. I even have a chainsaw.”

“Why?”

“Sometimes… when displaying my quarry… I would need to do things on my own.”

“Ugh! Don’t continue.”

The man grabbed another apple and shrugged, “You asked.”

He did, and he regretted it very much so.

His watch said it hat was eight seventeen. They’d been in there a while already. He was shocked.

“How come they haven’t been banging on the outer door yet?”

“Technically the carpet is glued to the top of the door so when the door closes properly, everything falls into place. If they manage to hear us even though the soundproofed walls and the several feet of steel, they wouldn’t know where to look.”

“Soundproof so the saws couldn’t be heard?”

“Naturally,” beamed the doctor.

“You are far too chipper about all of this,” remarked Will.

“I was broken out of prison by my most precious person. I am entitled to a bit of happiness at the moment.”

Will flushed and looked away. Before the imprisonment, Hannibal had never been so open about his feelings and intentions.

“Why are you happy to see me at all? Especially after our last conversation? And how you were going to eat my brain and I was going to kill you?”

“Dear Will,” smiled the cannibal, “-we are very similar and yet also different. The fact that we only believed that the only way we could forgive each other, was to kill the other, proves

it. You are perfection. I swore that I'd remember our time together always. You embraced yourself. All that is left is for you to embrace me as well."

Another flush blossomed in place and Will had to look away from the sincerity in the other man's gaze. Sometimes Hannibal's passion was too much to bear all at once.

He also felt guilty. Will hated guilt, especially where Hannibal was concerned. He also hated the fact that the cannibal could be so damn charming. It wasn't fair!

While Hannibal busied himself with his thoughts, Will took a few carrots and began nibbling on them. The room was neither cold or hot. The temperature wasn't overbearing and Will sighed once more, wishing he could just have a nice bed to sleep in.

He left Maine for a reason. One man living in a large, wooden house in the middle of nowhere wouldn't be any good. He had nothing around that he could use as a weapon other than his shotgun and he'd used most of the ammunition on Molly and Walter.

In truth, Will hadn't had a good night's sleep in months.

"Sleep, Will."

He regarded Hannibal, who was resting against the other table, hands folded neatly in his lap. "Sleep."

"Why don't you sleep?" he countered, feeling agitated. "You haven't eaten or drunk anything in nearly three days so you must be even more tired than I am."

"Yes, but I am used to operating on little sleep. I will keep you safe."

Will deliberated for a moment, before shoving the rifle over and shrugging. "If you want to lay down any time soon, wake me."

Will pulled off his jacket and bunched it up, using it as a makeshift pillow.

"Rest well, Will."

Will fell into the fuzz of sleep, lethargy hitting hard as all of his adrenaline wore off.

When Will awoke, he was alerted to loud noises and low grunting. Shaken suddenly and remembering what he'd fallen asleep listening to, Will shot to his feet unsteadily and looked around.

His jaw dropped immediately.

"I said no eating them!"

Hannibal had several Darkseekers strapped down on the different tables in the ‘murder dungeon’, none of them moving, but still breathing as their chests rose and fell swiftly. Their skin was severely burnt everywhere.

He looked on in horror as Hannibal continued to pull the female under his hands, apart. Her legs and arms had already been slowly hacked off, leaving her unable to fight back should she awaken any time soon.

“For that matter, how did you even get four Darkseekers at all?”

“I have found that these… creatures,” Hannibal grunted as he tried to cut the arm open, “-do not like me very much. I however, am very versatile when need be. Simply a lighter and a can of hairspray and I was safe from any true harm. I did notice that they prefer to keep a distance from me.”

“How did you even come into contact with them?” asked Will, busily watching as the skin parted beneath the scalpel. Hannibal removed the bone then, discarding it in a metal pail at his feet. It was morbid and interesting all at once.

“You were correct in the assumption that they’d be nesting above us. There is only one window after all and if they were smart, they’d have found a way to block it off. They did. I took the rifle with me and shot seven of them. The four others backed away toward the entryway, eyeing me carefully.”

Hannibal set the arm meat aside and began working on a leg, splitting the skin right down the center of the shin.

“Whenever I stepped toward them, they’d back up. It’s an interesting development since I’m sure the ones you’ve encountered took no shame in assaulting you. Eventually, I pulled a lighter out of my stash and one of the cans of spray - I always kept ready to make weapons around the house - and dealt with the remaining four. It wasn’t that difficult.”

Hannibal’s nonchalance impressed Will. But also, the Darkseekers actually backed away from Hannibal.

“You want to test this aversion they have, don’t you?”

“Precisely.”

“Is the… rest of the house cleared?” Will asked, needing to use a toilet really bad but not really wanting to go anywhere on his own.

“I’ve gone through every room and opened the curtains. While I encountered no more, I advise you to remain in the sunny spots and to carry a weapon with you. It’s nearly ten and the sun is bright today.”

Hannibal continued his de-boning of the Darkseekers and Will nodded, grabbing the rifle and passing the open doorway and climbing the stairs quietly.

His trip to the bathroom was quick and he was back in the ‘murder dungeon’ with Hannibal about five minutes later, only grabbing a few things along the way. Like a few pillows off the precious sofa in the drawing room. If he was going to stay in hell, he’d do it comfortably.

“I’m almost done. Once I have all I need, I will need your assistance in carrying these out to the lawn. A lesson to all the others in the neighborhood, if they are watching.”

Will shivered in discomfort at how hard core Hannibal was. The man took to everything with a sort of finesse and he was also brutal in some instances.

Will wondered is he should be worried that the creepy, Vampire/Zombie hybrids were scared of Hannibal. What about the man had made them retreat?

“I am ready to transport the bodies now,” announced Hannibal, placing his tools down.

Will put on one of the extra pairs of gloves and grabbed the nearest torso, trying desperately to hold it away from his body as he walked up the stairs. Hannibal followed after him, having a much easier time carrying the remains. But then again, carrying dead bodies for a couple of decades would build up some strength somehow.

As Hannibal ordered, the bodies were stationed out the the front of the house. The moment the sun touched them, they began to sizzle and smoke. Will watched in fascination as the Darkseekers burned on low.

“I think the melanin in their bodies was fully stripped away, leaving them extremely susceptible to ultraviolet radiation,” remarked Hannibal. “Darker skinned individuals have near seventy percent less of a chance at getting Skin Cancer let alone sunburn, because the amount of melanin in their epidermis helps protect against UVR. Also, the oxygen isn’t helping them as it should. Their metabolisms are too quick, leaving them hyper and needing to move constantly. It also makes them hungry. Their diets aren’t ideal and they have no self-control however, so they are getting no benefits from this change of life.”

“How much did you do while I slept?” asked the former profiler, feeling like he was getting schooled by a man who only knew about these creatures for fourteen hours at the least.

“I had time on my hands. You sleep very deeply.”

With that ominous comment, Hannibal returned to the house and Will sighed, knowing they had two more to drag up.

Once Hannibal’s display was up for the neighborhood to see, they went back to the house where Hannibal began cooking, lighting a match to get the fire on the stove going.

“I hope you don’t expect me to eat any of this?”

“Really Will, when have I steered you wrong before?”

He must have thought twice about that question because he followed it up with a, “Don’t answer that,” cutting Will off before he could give a snarky response.

“Besides,” continued the blond, “I already ate some.”

Will’s eyes bugged out and his entire body stiffened as he looked his friend over for signs of a change. Anything really.

“I am feeling fine, Will. It was four hours ago.”

Shaking his head, Will huffed and sat in the small chair. “I’m not eating it.”

“I’m sure I could convince you.”

Hannibal was rummaging through the cupboards, pulling out cans of food. One, Hannibal Lecter actually had canned food in his cupboards? Two, the FBI didn’t clear the house when Hannibal disappeared? What the hell had they been up to while Will was in Europe? Sitting on their asses?

“I know what you are thinking and yes, I sometimes used canned products. Some of these are still good and can be added to the meat. Unfortunately, all the herbs and spices have gone stale and it would be pointless to use them.”

“You’ll actually subsist to canned goods?” Will asked with a smirk.

“I had to subsist on food that barely deserved to be called food, for eighteen months. Only on visiting days did I get the privilege of dining on something worthwhile.”

There was that tinge of guilt poking at Will’s heart.

“You surrendered on your own. A selfish action really. You wanted me to be so consumed by you that I couldn’t stop thinking about you if I knew where you were. You chose that path on your own,” he reminded the man, because while he felt bad, Hannibal could have gone. He could have run when he had the chance. He had hours at his disposal. Could have been on his way to another country by that time. “Though to be honest, I knew you would surrender if I denied you.”

Hannibal opened the cans he planned on using and set them aside, the look on his face contemplative. “My compassion for you is inconvenient, Will.”

“Can you really feel compassion for a man whose brain you had planned to eat?”

“It was *because* of my compassion that I tried to eat you. I had always wanted your beautifully dangerous mind for my own since the day we met. My desire for it has not waned, only... *evolved* some.”

“‘Evolved’ how?” Will queried, noting that he was nearly breathless with the intensity of this discussion.

“I have your mind now. You have reached your Becoming and have finally embraced who you are. And the revelation that your thoughts and memory palace are consumed with images of me show that I monopolize your time no matter where you are. You cannot be rid of me as much as you wished, Will. I am here and I always will be.”

Hannibal delicately cut the meat into cubes and placed them in the pan. The sizzle filled the room.

Will tried to calm himself because talking with Hannibal always lead to revelations he didn't want to know. But usually ones he needed nonetheless.

As he watched the pan, he couldn't help but think of where the meat came from and his first interaction with a Darkseeker.

He was scouting out the house. Had taken one of the dogs away. Will had gone out into the surrounding woods to try to find him. A distinctive comparison to what happened to Buster when he was attacked by Randall Tier had come to mind.

The cold of Winter, with sparkling snow covering the ground outside. The sky dark and the stars and moon shining. Will calling out for his missing canine companion, only to suddenly get jumped by something whose mouth was much too wide to be normal.

And Will, with shotgun in hand, unloaded three bullets into the creature's chest and head, his body covered in the blood of his attacker.

Once on his feet, Will gazed dispassionately down at the creature and aimed a kick at the mutilated head for good measure. He took up his firearm and went deeper into the forest, finding the German Shepherd collapsed on it's side, whining low in pain.

And Will tried to help it up, but it wouldn't move. The eyes were already bloodshot and it was beginning to growl every other breath, body twitching forcefully. The gums becoming inflamed and the veins visible and distended.

With great regret, Will put Bill out of his misery before he could complete the change. And then Will returned to the house in hopes of washing off all the mess. He placed the gun on the front steps and entered the building.

And Molly greeted him at the door, pulled him into a hug and told him how sorry she was. And he accepted her kind words and Walter's encouraging but false words of 'it'll get better' as he went to shower.

When he returned, his wife was bent over Winston, tears of blood running down her face. Walter was lying on the floor, his breathing already speeding up too quickly. And not even five minutes later, Will was rushing through the house to get out the back door in hopes of getting to his gun again, two ravaging Darkseekers behind him.

He shot them both once in the head and settled himself on the stairs as he unleashed his pent up emotions.

He should have known that they could have caught the virus from the blood on him. He should have thought it out.

All the while, he couldn't help but note how black the blood looked in the moonlight.

"Will?"

He blinked, drawing himself out of the terrible memory of his failure to find Hannibal standing before him, hand on his shoulder comfortingly.

“I tried to call you but you weren’t responding. Where did you go?”

“Just… remembering some things.”

“Things… that occurred most recently I presume?”

“Yeah.”

Hannibal’s strong hands held Will steady. His dark eyes were imploring, beseeching Will to pay attention. “Will, you said it yourself, only those who aren’t affected at all will survive. You cannot control what happened to your wife and her child.”

Will’s shoulders shook silently with emotion, and Hannibal did the one thing Will never expected of him. He drew the former-professor into his arms and soothed away his worries.

Will clung to the man, unable to calm himself on his own. And he was grateful to have come for Hannibal.

“Do you truly believe that this community will accept my presence?”

Will sipped the water that had been boiled prior to consuming it. “Well,” he murmured, casting a glance behind his shoulder where Hannibal’s entire lawn was covered in the bodies of Darkseekers, “your discovery would certainly help them. Might even keep the Darkseekers away.”

Hannibal was a cannibal, and they had decided that the creatures must have been terrified because he ate his own kind. And proved that he had no problem eating their kind either.

Hannibal smiled. It had been a week since he’d been rescued by Will, and as they had eaten Darkseeker flesh every day and nothing had happened to them. Hannibal was certain that there were no side effects to their new diet.

Will was busy draining gasoline from the various stations they were passing. In his own words, coming with offerings would make the community more hospitable.

Oil and Gasoline would be needed for anything and everything. So, Hannibal and Will looked around, found an RV on the outskirts of the city, and proceeded to fill it to the brim with all manner of supplies. And Hannibal worked as the deterrent, stopping the Darkseekers lingering in the shadows, from coming too close.

And Will noticed that they avoided him as well now.

They’d make it out of this hellhole, and maybe they’d be able to get rid of these monsters.

He could only hope.

Hannibal was smiling as if nothing was wrong, but Will could sense and see the dislike those in control of the community had for the man at his side. Still, the leader had welcomed them because Will's thinking ahead for the community as a whole, had softened him up considerably.

Said man slumped into a chair in the small apartment that he'd provided both Will and Hannibal. "You were gone for a while," the man said to Will, a toothpick between his teeth. "What did you learn about these sick sons of bitches?"

The two cannibals shared a look, and Hannibal began his detailed explanation of his observations.

They'd make this work. Judging by his face, Raj knew that survival was the most important things at present. And he honestly didn't care if Hannibal was a murderer.

"You two will be the scouts," the man decided. "As you have been out to the city before, and you seem to repel these bastards, it's only best that you handle the weekly trip out. Whatever you can get."

Hannibal nodded.

"And if I happen to decorate the perimeter of the community with dead bodies, do not be frightened."

Will's head met his hands for what felt like the millionth time in the last two weeks. He cared about Hannibal, truly he did, but the man needed to work on his sense of humor.

Raj wasn't offended in the least though. He merely gave a grim smile and nodded. "If it keeps the fuckers out, then do whatever you want."

Hannibal the Cannibal, the Chesapeake Ripper, the Copycat Killer, and Il Mostro, had earned a new title.

Dark Eater. Honestly, the fact that one man had managed to attain such global renown as only a serial killer, was impressive. And to add onto this new identity, a community who looked to him to use his skill and hobby to protect them, and it was like something out of a fairy tale. Or a myth.

One thing was certain. Hannibal would be a terrifying figure taught to future generations.

Legendary in the extreme.

A/N: DONE!

How was it? Let me know!

Check out my other Hannigram fics!

See ya! :D

CHECK ME OUT ON TUMBLR. HELLY-WATERMELONSMELLINFELLON. I FOLLOW BACK.

End Notes

How was it?

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!